(b) if so, whether any new services proposed to be introduced during the current year;

(c) whether any steps have been taken to fulfil the demand of the people to start EMU service between Barddhaman and Chittaranjan and between Asansol and Chittaranjan;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether more EMU trains proposed to be provided in this section to reduce over-crowding of Asansol-Barddhaman section; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Introduction of trains service including EMU/MEMU services is a continuous process on Indian Railways subject to traffic justification and operational feasibility and resource availability.

(b) There is no such proposal at present

(c) and (d). Eight (8) pairs of M/EMU locals alongwith two (2) conventional rake trains serve the Barddhaman-Asansol section. Running of M/EMU trains on Barddhaman-Chittaranjan or Asansol-Chittaranjan section can be considered only after electrification of Asansol-Madhupur-Jha-Jha section

(e) There is no such proposal at present

(f) Operational and resource constraints.

[Translation]

Roads Digging in Himachal Pradeeh

1032 SHRI SAT MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Public Works Department has digged up roads in Himachal Pradesh for laying the telephone cables;

(b) if so, whether the Government have made full payment to the Public Works Department of the State.

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the time by which the full payment is likely to be made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir

(b) to (d). Invariably the payment for the road cutting and restoration is paid in advance before commencement of cable laying on the basis of approximate calculation. The final bills are settled on actual measurements and in case of disputes joint inspection is also done. Out of the bills of Rs. 22.8 crores received for the period 1.4.93 to 30.9.96 only Rs. 4.8 crores are pending due to various reasons given below.

(i) Rates charged by PWD field units are at variance than those fixed by State Government.

(ii) Disputes about measurements.

(iii) Dispute about type of road.

(iv) In cases, where digging has not been completed However, a letter has been received from Hon'ble Minister, PWD, H.P. Government indicating the balance amount as Rs. 10.21 crores. Chief Engineer, PWD, H.P. has been requested to supply the details so that the figures are reconciled.

(e) All efforts are being made to make the Payment of pending bills within two months wherever the works are completed and no dispute exists.

[English]

Telephone facility to Freedom Fighters

1033 SHRI SOUMYA RANJAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether telephone facility on priority basis is available to freedom fighters;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether the Government propose to provide such facility?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The freedom fighters are eligible for one telephone connection at a place where they are normally available under Non-OYT/Swatantra Senani (Non-OYT-SWS) category : subject to technical feasibility. No installation fee is charged under this category and only half of the normal rental is charged. This facility is also available to the widows of the freedom fighters who are in receipt of pension under Freedom Fighters family pension scheme.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above

PCO in West Bengal

1034 SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of requests received by West Bengal Telecom Circle, Calcutta from individuals/associations/ Clubs regarding providing of PCO and fax facility at Mathabhanga district Coochbehar (West Bengal) during the year 1996;

(b) if so, the steps taken thereon; and